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DURHAM, N.H. – The Whittemore School of Business and Economics at the University of New Hampshire has been named one of the top 100 graduate business schools in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report*, breaking into the elite top 100 national ranking for the first time.

The Whittemore School is ranked 83 in the nation, a position also held by Northeastern University and Pepperdine University. Previously, the Whittemore School's highest ranking by *U.S. News & World Report* was 133 for its undergraduate programs, which occurred in 2003 and 2004. The 2006 ranking is considered one of the most prestigious among business schools and marks a watershed moment for the Whittemore School as it is recognized nationally as one of the best business schools in the country.

The ranking is based on the school's MBA programs, the excellence of which are considered by many in business and academia as reflective of the quality of a business school as a whole. The Whittemore School offers an Executive MBA, and full- and part-time MBA programs in Durham and Manchester. The school also offers an MA in accounting and an MA and PhD in economics, a MS in Management of Technology and undergraduate programs in business administration, economics, and hospitality management.

"The quality and comprehensiveness of the Whittemore School's graduate programs have been one of the best-kept secrets in the region for many years, but now our secret is out at a national level. The business school is a leader in innovative and cutting-edge programs that serve the changing needs of students seeking an outstanding business education. This recognition by *U.S. News & World Report* is a testament to the success of those efforts," UNH President Ann Weaver Hart said.

According to a 2004 survey of enrolled students conducted by UNH Admissions, the Whittemore Schools' reputation was named a top critical factor that influenced the decision to attend UNH. The Whittemore School was the only school or college at the university specifically identified as one of the top 10 critical influencers regarding the decision to enroll.

"We are both proud and excited about this national recognition of our programs, students, faculty and staff. It demonstrates what can be accomplished with hard work and good people", said Steve Bolander, dean of the Whittemore School. "Such recognition is testimony to the

partnerships that we have built with industry, and to the continuing support that we receive from our alumni. This ranking comes at a time when the school will be announcing even more new and exciting programs. We recognize, however, that there is still room for improvement and we are committed to continuing our progress.”

The national ranking by *U.S. News & World Report* comes just four months after the business school was named one of the Top 25 Most Entrepreneurial Colleges by *The Princeton Review* and *Forbes.com*, ranking 10th in the nation.

U.S. News & World Report surveyed all 391 master's programs in business accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business. The ranking was based on surveys of business school deans and directors of accredited programs, and corporate recruiters and company contacts. The ranking also was based on placement success, measured by mean starting salary and bonus, and employment rates for full-time M.B.A. program graduates. Also considered in the overall ranking were the mean GMAT scores of students selected for graduate enrollment, mean undergraduate GPA scores, and the proportion of applicants accepted by the school.

The 2006 rankings will be available Friday, April 1, on the *U.S. News & World Report* website at <http://www.usnews.com/usnews/rankguide/rghome.htm> and on newsstands Monday, April 4.